

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3095

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 3072

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR MAY 13, 1977

1. LEAD ARTICLE IN THAWRA DEALT WITH ALLON'S MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY. QUOTING FROM AFP AND ADDING ITS OWN EMBELLISHMENTS, ARTICLE DEPICTED US-ISRAELI RELATIONS AS BECOMING STRAINED. IT SAID: "THERE WIDESPREAD BELIEF IN THE ZIONIST ENTITY THAT ISRAEL WILL EVENTUALLY BE COMPELLED TO MAKE REAL CONCESSIONS IN FACE OF INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE." IT CONTINUED THAT "CARTER, BY POINTING TO MODERATION OF ARAB LEADERS AND THEIR CONSTRUCTIVE POSITIONS, IS NOT MEETING WITH APPROVAL OF MAJORITY OF ISRAELIS." ARTICLE CATALOGUED SERIES OF ADMINISTRATION DECISIONS WHICH DISPLEASED
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ISRAELIS SUCH AS CALL FOR PALESTINIAN HOMELAND AND RESTRICTIONS ON SALES OF THE KFIR FIGHTER.

2. STORY ON CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE CARRIED UNDER CAPTION "PRES. CARTER IN WASHINGTON: 'NO SOLUTION OF MIDEAST ISSUE WITHOUT NATIONAL HOMELAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS.'" BESIDES HIGHLIGHTING CARTER'S REMARKS ON NATIONAL HOMELAND,

ARTICLE NOTED THAT HE DECLARED SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN US AND ISRAEL AND THAT ISRAEL WOULD AGREE TO ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL HOMELAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS "BUT HE DIDN'T SPECIFY THE LOCATION OF THAT HOMELAND." SECRETARY'S REMARKS AFTER ALLON MEETING PUBLISHED IN WHICH HE STATED HE DID NOT FIND ANY CHANGE IN PLO ATTITUDE; NOR WAS THERE ANY CHANGE IN US POSITION TOWARD THE PLO. "HE CONCLUDED HIS STATEMENT BY SAYING THAT US IS COMMITTED TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY, AND WILL PROVIDE IT WITH THE NECESSARY WEAPONS TO MAINTAIN THIS SECURITY."

3. COMMENTARIES CONTINUED TO DISCUSS THE US ROLE IN THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS. MOST COLUMNIST SAW ISRAEL TRYING TO DERAIL EFFORTS TO RECONVENE GENEVA AND CONTINUED TO CALL UPON THE US TO EXERT ITS INFLUENCE ON ISRAEL. THAWRA COLUMNIST GAVE CREDIT TO US "WHICH HAS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY OF THE ARAB-ZIONIST CONFLICT CALLED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT HOMELAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS AND HAS STARTED SEEKING MEANS WHICH COULD LEAD TO SETTLEMENT OF THE REGION'S CRISIS IN PEACEFUL MANNER." HE PARROTED AL-ASSAD'S CALL FOR US TO TAKE "NEUTRAL, OBJECTIVE AND POSITIVE POSITION" TOWARD THE PROBLEM.

4. LEBANON: PROMINENT STORY CARRIED IN BAATH WHICH CITED REPORTS THAT SARKIS CONCENTRATING ON REBUILDING LEBANESE ARMY AND THAT HE CONDUCTING CONTACTS TOWARDS THIS END. IT SAID LEBANESE POLITICAL CIRCLES BELIEVED THAT FORMATION UNCLASSIFIED

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OF ARMY WOULD HELP RETURN LIFE TO NORMAL. IT CLAIMED 75 PERCENT OF TOP-RANKING OFFICERS IN THE LEBANESE ARMY HAVE THUS FAR SUBMITTED THEIR RESIGNATIONS PARTICULARLY AT RANK OF BRIGADIER AND COLONEL. MURPHY

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